

Message Text

PAGE 01 NATO 05689 01 OF 03 152041Z

67

ACTION EUR-12

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USNMR SHAPE

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USCINCEUR

USDOCOSOUTH

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

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AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 3 USNATO 5689

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, NATO

SUBJC: AMBASSADOR RUMSFELD'S FAREWELL TO NAC

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF FAREWELL REMARKS BY AMBASSADOR RUMSFELD TO THE
NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL, OCTOBER 15:

BEGIN LEXT:

MR. CHAIRMAN, I AM WITHOUT INSTRUCTIONS -- MY REMARKS NEEDLESS
TO SAY WILL BE WHOLLY PERSONAL.

AS I MEET WITH YOU, FOR THE LAST TIME AS PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE UNITED STATES, I MUST MENTION A THOUGHT THAT HAS OCCURRED
TO ME OFTEN DURING MY SERVICE HERE -- THAT THIS NORTH ATLANTIC
COUNCIL, IN MANY IMPORTANT WAYS, RESEMBLES ANOTHER INSTITUTION

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PAGE 02 NATO 05689 01 OF 03 152041Z

THAT IS CLOSE TO MY HEART -- THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES.

THE RESEMBLANCES ARE NOT SIMPLY THOSE OF UNIQUE PEOPLE OR
OUTSTANDING PERSONALITIES , WHICH THERE ARE BUT IN WHAT

MAKES BOTH INSTITUTIONS WORK -- WHAT MAKES THEM EFFECTIVE.

I BEGIN WITH HUMAN BEINGS, AND CHANGE. IN MY COUNTRY, A THIRD OF THE SEATS IN THE UNITED STATES SENATE, AND ALL IN THE UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COME BEFORE THE VOTERS EVERY OTHER YEAR. EACH ELECTION SENDS SOME NEW CONGRESSMEN TO THE CAPITOL, AND WITH THEM FRESH POINTS OF VIEW. NOT ALL OF THE NEW IDEAS ARE GOOD, AND SOME GOOD ONES DO NOT SURVIVE. BUT, THOSE THAT DO HELP TO REVITALIZE THE CONGRESS, AND THUS GOVERNMENT AND OUR COUNTRY.

HERE IN THIS COUNCIL, WE, TOO, SEE NEW FACES REGULARLY AROUND THE TABLE. EACH NEW PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE BRINGS INTO THIS ROOM AN EXPERIENCE AND PERSPECTIVE WHICH DIFFERS FROM HIS PREDECESSOR'S AND HIS COLLEAGUES'. MINE WAS DIFFERENT FROM MY PREDECESSOR'S, AND MY DISTINGUISHED SUCCESSOR, YOU WILL FIND, WILL DIFFER FROM ME, FOR HE HAS HAD A CAREER QUITE UNLIKE MINE.

MY POINT IS THAT THERE IS VALUE NOT ONLY IN THE VARIETY OF APPROACHES ,
KNOWLEDGE, INSIGHTS AND EXPERIENCES REPRESENTED AT THIS TABLE, BUT IN THE FACT THAT THEY DO CHANGE.

ALTHOUGH SOME CHANGE IS NECESSARY, SO TOO ARE STABILITY AND CONTINUITY. WE DO HAVE ONE INDISPENSABLE MAN AMONG US -- OUR DEAN, WHOSE VAST EXPERIENCE WITH TRIALS AND TRIUMPHS, GREAT AND SMALL, PROVIDES THE NECESSARY CONTEXT FOR ANY NEWCOMER TO MAKE A USEFUL CONTRIBUTION TO THE WORK OF THE ALLIANCE.

FULL USE OF THESE CONSTANTLY CHANGING, SOMETIMES VALUABLE HUMAN RESOURCES MAKE THE COUNCIL A PLACE OF SEASONED UNDERSTANDING, WHERE BETTER IDEAS CAN TAKE SHAPE AND DEVELOP, AND INFORMED DECISIONS CAN BE TAKEN IN RESPONSE TO THE PROBLEMS WE FACE. I DO NOT UNDERSTIMATE THE RECORD TO DATE, WHICH IS THERE FOR ALL TO SEE AND FOR HISTORY TO JUDGE. BUT I DO POINT TO THE OPPORTUNITIES

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PAGE 03 NATO 05689 01 OF 03 152041Z

NOT YET FULLY EXPLOITED TO APPLY OUR CHANGING STOCKPILE OF WISDOMS AND COMPETENCES TO EVEN GREATER ADVANTAGE.

A SECOND THOUGHT TURNS ON THE COUNCIL'S RELATIONS WITH THE PUBLICS OF OUR MEMBER COUNTRIES.

EVERY FIRST-TERM SENATOR AND CONGRESSMAN LEARNS THAT HIS POLITICAL SUCCESS DEPENDS ON CORRECTLY ESTIMATING AND KNOWING THE PEOPLE HE REPRESENTS -- WHAT THEY THINK, THEIR HOPES, THEIR ASPIRATIONS. AND HE KNOWS THAT HIS POLITICAL SUCCESS DEPENDS ON UNDERSTANDING AND LEADING HIS CHANGING CONSTITUENCY.

THE LIFE OF THIS COUNCIL, AND OF NATO, DEPENDS IN A SIMILAR WAY ON THE DEPTH OF OUR CONTACTS WITH THE PEOPLE -- EVEN THOUGH OUR POSITIONS DON'T DEPEND DIRECTLY ON THEIR VOTES. THE COUNCIL RARELY LACKS A REASONABLY CLEAR SENSE OF PUBLIC ATTITUDES AT HOME. BUT REPORTS OF THESE ATTITUDES ARE MOST OFTEN CHanneLED TO US THROUGH OFFICIAL AND PRESS FILTERS, LEAVING US ONCE REMOVED FROM WHAT IN THE CONGRESS WOULD BE CALLED A "GUT FEELING" ABOUT WHAT OUR PEOPLE ARE THINKING. MORE THAN EVER, WE NEED TO SAMPLE THE ATMOSPHERE AT THE SOURCE, NOT SIMPLY IN OUR OWN COUNTRIES BUT IN OTHER MEMBER COUNTRIES AS WELL.

IN SHORT, THE ALLIANCE MUST KNOW THE PEOPLE IT SERVES. IT MUST, THROUGH TRAVEL AND EFFORT SEE THEM FIRST HAND. THE DIVIDENDS IN INTEREST AND UNDERSTANDING ARE GREAT.

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PAGE 01 NATO 05689 02 OF 03 151914Z

67

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-03 INR-05 L-01 ACDA-05

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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 2 OF 3 USNATO 5689

THERE IS A COROLLARY TO THIS: THERE CAN BE STILL CLOSER RELATIONSHIPS AND CONTACTS BETWEEN MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL AND NATIONAL PARLIAMENTARIANS. WE COULD MEET MORE FREQUENTLY WITH OUR LEGISLATORS, IN BRUSSELS AND IN CAPITALS; OBSERVE THEIR PROCEEDINGS FROM TIME TO TIME; AND FIND WAYS FOR THEM TO TAKE A FIRST-HAND LOOK AT OURS.

I LOOK AT COUNCIL-PARLIAMENT CONTACTS AS AN OPPORTUNITY. THE

FUTURE OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL, AFTER ALL, RESTS WITH THE PEOPLE -- AND THEIR REPRESENTATIVES, WHO DETERMINE SUPPORT FOR THE ALLIANCE.

ANOTHER NOTEWORTHY CHARACTERISTIC COMMON TO THE COUNCIL AND THE CONGRESS IS THE EFFECTIVE WAY IN WHICH MEMBERS OF BOTH BODIES SEEK CONSENSUS.

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PAGE 02 NATO 05689 02 OF 03 151914Z

IN THE CONGRESS, CONSENSUS MUST TAKE ACCOUNT OF DIVERSE, OFTEN CONFLICTING CLAIMS ON AVAILABLE RESOURCES, OF POLITICAL SENSITIVITIES AND SENSIBILITIES, OF REGIONAL INTERESTS, AND THE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL FORCES WORKING ON EACH MEMBER.

IN THIS COUNCIL THE SEARCH FOR CONSENSUS MUST DO ALL THIS, AND MORE. FOR THE COUNCIL MUST CONSIDER NOT JUST THE CLAIMS, REGIONAL PRIORITIES AND POLITICAL SENSITIVITIES OF EACH MEMBER GOVERNMENT, BUT OF THE INDIVIDUAL PARTIES IN COALITIONS WHICH CONTROL GOVERNMENTS

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AND OFTEN OF THE PARTIES IN OPPOSITION AS WELL. ON THE WHOLE, THE COUNCIL CARRIES OUT THIS EXQUISITELY COMPLICATED TASK EXCEEDINGLY WELL. NO ONE OF US WOULD CLAIM THAT THE COUNCIL IS A PERFECT INSTRUMENT OF POLITICAL CONSULTATION BETWEEN COUNTRIES; IN FACT, BY ITS VERY NATURE, CONSULTATION CAN NEVER BE A PERFECT PROCESS.

BUT THE NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL DOES HAPPEN TO BE THE BEST SYSTEM YET DEvised FOR INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL CONSULTATIONS, THE "VERY CENTER," IN THE WORDS OF PAUL-HENRI SPAAK, "OF THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DIPLOMATIC INNOVATION EVER ATTEMPTED." THE INNOVATION HAS WORKED AND WORKED WELL -- AND I CHALLENGE ANYONE TO LOOK AROUND THIS FRENETIC, CHANGING GLOBE AND FIND AN INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTION THAT HAS DONE A MORE EFFECTIVE JOB.

I SAY THIS BECAUSE THE NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL, IN ITS FIRST 25 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE, HAS BEEN NOT ONLY THE FORUM FOR PRODUCTIVE CONSULTATIONS IN THE SENSE OF EXCHANGING INFORMATION AND ASSESSING IDEAS AND ATTITUDES ON BASIC PROBLEMS FACING THE ALLIANCE -- IT HAS ALSO BEEN ABLE TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THEM. IT HAS BEEN ABLE TO PREVENT MOST DIFFERENCES FROM BECOMING DISPUTES, MOST DISPUTES FROM BECOMING CONFRONTATION, AND CONFRONTATION FROM BECOMING CONFLICT.

I WAS TOLD BEFORE I CAME TO BRUSSELS, SOME 20 MONTHS AGO, THAT PRESSURE FOR FULLER CONSULTATION AND INDEED CRITICISM FOR INADEQUATE CONSULTATION WOULD BE MY GREATEST PROBLEM. I HAVE NOT FOUND IT SO. INDEED, DURING THIS PERIOD, I BELIEVE, WE HAVE SEEN CONSULTATIONS IMPROVE AND, INTERESTINGLY, THE

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PAGE 03 NATO 05689 02 OF 03 151914Z

UNITED STATES HAS EVEN SUGGESTED, OFFERED STILL BROADER CONSULTATION THAN SOME IN THE ALLIANCE HAVE FELT POSSIBLE AT THIS TIME.

IT IS CLEAR THAT, WITH GROWING INTERDEPENDENCE, CONSULTATIONS WITH IN OUR ALLIANCE ARE INCREASINGLY INDISPENSABLE. THEY ARE THE CORE OF NATO AS A POLITICAL INSTITUTION AS WELL AS A DEFENSE ALLIANCE. THEIR IMPORTANCE CANNOT BE OVER-STATED. I KNOW THAT MY SUCCESSOR, AND PRESIDENT FORD BOTH SHARE THIS CONVICTION.

BUT THERE ARE OCCASIONS WHEN THE CONSULTATION PROCESS FALLS SHORT, WHEN THE ALLIANCE SEEMS UNABLE TO COPE WITH A PROBLEM, AND CRITICISM IS HEARD FROM MANY SIDES. HERE, IT SEEMS TO ME, THERE IS A CRUCIAL DISTINCTION TO BE MADE BETWEEN WHAT NATO IS ORGANIZED TO DO, AND WHAT IT IS SOMETIMES EXPECTED TO DO.

THE ALLIANCE HAS MANY TASKS -- TASKS INHERENT IN THE LANGUAGE OF ITS TREATY, OTHERS ASSIGNED BY MINISTERS, AND STILL OTHERS WHICH IT UNDERTAKES AS A VERY NATURAL PART OF WHAT IT CONCEIVES AS ITS RESPONSIBILITY. FOR ALL OF THESE, THE ALLIANCE PREPARES ASSIDUOUSLY AND WITH INVENTIVENESS AND APPLICATION. IT CARRIES OUT SUCH WORK REASONABLY WELL.

NATO COMES IN FOR CRITICISM MOST OFTEN WHEN SOMETHING HAPPENS THAT THE ALLIANCE HAS NOT PREPARED FOR OR ORGANIZED ITSELF TO HANDLE -- SOMETHING IT HAS NOT PREVIOUSLY AGREED TO DO AS AN ALLIANCE, OR ARRANGED AND PLANNED TO DO TOGETHER.

SOME PROBLEMS OF THIS SORT TECHNICALLY LIE OUTSIDE "THE TREATY AREA." WHO CAN FORGET HOW SHARPLY ALLIES DIFFERED ON WHETHER THE MIDDLE EAST CONFLICT OF A YEAR AGO WAS TO BE VIEWED AS VITALLY AFFECTING NATO'S INTERESTS, OR AS OUTSIDE ITS SPHERE? THE PUBLIC SPLIT LEFT THE ALLIANCE OPEN FOR SOME HARSH JUDGEMENTS.

OTHER EXAMPLES CAN BE CITED WHERE THERE ARE DIFFERENCES -- TERRORISM, IN WHICH MEMBER COUNTRIES FIND THEMSELVES THE LOCUS OF CONFLICT BETWEEN PARTIES OUTSIDE THE TREATY AREA; THE ECONOMIC SPHERE WHERE INFLATION, UNEMPLOYMENT, BALANCE OF PAYMENTS PROBLEMS, AND THREATENED INSTABILITIES CALL FOR SOLUTIONS WHICH IF UNCOORDINATED COULD AFFECT THE ABILITY OF EACH NATO MEMBER
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PAGE 04 NATO 05689 02 OF 03 151914Z

TO PLAY ITS PART. THESE ARE BUT EXAMPLES OF ISSUES, WITH RESPECT TO WHICH, FOR VARIOUS REASONS, THE ALLIANCE HAS NOT, AS YET, ORGANIZED ITSELF TO ASSIST.

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PAGE 01 NATO 05689 03 OF 03 152055Z

67

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-03 INR-05 L-01 ACDA-05

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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 3 OF 3 USNATO 5689

WE, THE ALLIANCE, MUST RECOGNIZE THAT FACT. AND IF A PROBLEM
ARISES IN AN AREA WHERE, FOR WHATEVER REASON, WE HAVE FAILED
TO ORGANIZE OURSELVES TO ASSIST BECAUSE IT DID NOT FIT OUR
PREVIOUS SCHEME OF THINGS, AND WE HAVE NOT ADEQUATELY PREPARED,
WE MUST ACCEPT THE DISADVANTAGE INHERENT IN THE RESULTING
LACK OF HARMONIZATION OF VIEWS, WITHOUT SURPRISE, AND WITH
AS LITTLE DAMAGE TO THE ALLIANCE AS POSSIBLE. WE CAN ALL HOPE
THAT TERRORISM, INFLATION, AND CRISES LIKE THE YOM KIPPUR
WAR WILL NOT FORM THE PATTERN OF THE FUTURE. BUT THEY MAY.
AND, IF THEY DO, THIS ALLIANCE -- THE FIFTEEN ALLIED GOVERN-
MENTS -- MUST KNOW THAT WE KNEW THEY COULD, THAT IF THEY DID
THEY COULD AFFECT OUR BASIC INTERESTS, AND THAT WE ACCEPTED
THE RISKS OF FAILING TO BE READY TO ACT AS ALLIES, HAVING CARE-
FULLY WEIGHED THE POTENTIAL DAMAGE TO OUR BROADER AND FUNDAMENTAL
RELATIONSHIP.

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PAGE 02 NATO 05689 03 OF 03 152055Z

NO ONE CAN REASONABLY ASK OR EXPECT PEOPLE OR ORGANIZATIONS
TO DO THINGS WELL FOR WHICH THEY ARE NOT PREPARED. IT IS UN-
REASONABLE TO CRITICIZE FOR FAILURE IN SUCH CASES. WE SHOULD,
I BELIEVE, IN FACT, BE BETTER PREPARED. WE SHOULD LOOK AHEAD.

WE SHOULD LOOK OUTSIDE OUR TRADITIONAL AREAS OF COMPETENCE AND RESPONSIBILITY AND COMFORTABLE HABIT, TO SEE WHAT IS COMING AND TO DECIDE BEFORE THE FACT, IN WHAT WAYS IF ANY THE OLD BOUNDARIES HAVE BEEN CHANGED IN THIS CHANGING WORLD.

I HAVE TALKED ABOUT THE POLITICAL SIDE OF THE ALLIANCE. I DO NOT NEGLECT THE MILITARY SIDE. THE COMMAND STRUCTURE IS WELL ESTABLISHED. IT WORKS. THE SAME CANNOT BE SAID OF OUR ABILITY TO MAKE THE BEST USE OF THE WEAPONS AND MATERIAL AVAILABLE. THAT NOW WELL KNOWN WORD, RATIONALIZATION, AND ITS UNDISCIPLINED PROGENY -- STANDARDIZATION, MODERNIZATION, AND FLEXIBILITY -- ARE EVER WITH US, AND RIGHTLY SO. I AM PLEASED THAT WORK ALONG THESE LINES IS UNDERWAY.

MORE NEEDS TO BE DONE.

OUR ABILITY TO MAINTAIN WHAT SECRETARY KISSINGER CALLS A "PEACEFUL INTERNATIONAL ORDER" DEPENDS ON OUR ABILITY TO DEFEND OURSELVES. WE MUST BE STRONG. AND, WE MUST BE SEEN BY OUR PUBLIC, FRIENDS, AND POTENTIAL ADVERSARIES TO BE STRONG. THE VERY EXISTENCE OF NEGOTIATIONS ON EUROPEAN SECURITY AND COOPERATION, MUTUAL AND BALANCED FORCE REDUCTIONS, AND STRATEGIC ARMS LIMITATION DEPENDS IN MAJOR DEGREE ON OUR STRENGTH, AND IT WILL CONTINUE TO BE SO.

IT IS A DIFFICULT TIME IN WHICH TO GOVERN. OUR PEOPLE EXPECT NEAR INSTANT SOLUTIONS. EXPECTATIONS OUTSTRIP RESULTS. LEADERS ARE REPLACED BEFORE THEY EVEN HAVE TIME TO IDENTIFY THE PROBLEMS THOUGHTFULLY, LET ALONE SOLVE THEM.

FOR THE PERIOD AHEAD, THE MOST PRESSING TASK OF GOVERNMENT, OF LEADERS, IN MY VIEW, WILL BE COMMUNICATION. FOR DEMOCRACY TO WORK WELL IN OUR TIME, FOR THE PEOPLE TO BE ABLE TO SENSIBLY AND EFFECTIVELY HELP GUIDE AND DIRECT THE COURSE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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PAGE 03 NATO 05689 03 OF 03 152055Z

AS THEY MUST UNDER OUR SYSTEMS, WILL REQUIRE UNDERSTANDING. HOPE AND THE SENSE OF IMPATIENCE NECESSARY TO MAKE THINGS BETTER, YES, BUT ALSO THE KNOWLEDGE, THE UNDERSTANDING NECESSARY TO AVOID THE APPEALINGLY SEDUCTIVE SOLUTIONS TO HUMAN PROBLEMS WHICH ARE WRONG. AS H.L. MENCKEN HAS SAID, FOR EVERY HUMAN PROBLEM THERE IS A SOLUTION THAT IS "SIMPLE, NEAT, AND WRONG." DESPITE THE PRESSURES FOR SIMPLE AND INSTANTANEOUS SOLUTIONS, PATIENCE, INDEED TOLERANCE OF IMPERFECTIONS, AND SUFFICIENT TIME FOR THE RIGHT SOLUTIONS TO WORK, ARE NEEDED IF WE ARE TO AVOID THEM.

THE TIME I HAVE SPENT HERE WITH YOU WITHOUT QUESTION HAS BEEN ONE OF THE MOST VALUABLE EXPERIENCES OF MY LIFE. MY THANKS AND GRATITUDE GO TO EACH OF YOU. I AM PROUD TO HAVE BEEN A PART OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION. I DO TO MY NEW

RESPONSIBILITIES UNQUESTIONABLY ENRICHED BY IT.

IF I HAVE ANY ADVICE AS I LEAVE, IT IS TO HUMBLY STATE
THE OBVIOUS. STRENGTHEN YOUR SECRETARY GENERAL, I URGE YOU.
NOT ONLY IS HE A PARTICULARLY GOOD ONE, WHICH HE IS, BUT AN
EFFECTIVE SECRETARY GENERAL IS NEEDED, INDEED IS VITAL TO

THE SUCCESS OF THE ALLIANCE. CONSULT YES, DISCUSS, DEBATE,
EVEN ARGUE, BUT ULTIMATELY WE MUST ACT -- AND THAT TAKES
LEADERSHIP. WE HAVE A LEADER IN JOSEPH LUNS. WE ARE FORGUNATE.
AND THIS INSTITUTION WILL CONTINUE TO WORK IF WE RECOGNIZE HOW
FUNDAMENTALLY IMPORTANT THE OFFICE OF THE
SECRETARY GENERAL IS TO THE SUCCESS OF THE ALLIANCE. HE IS
A WISE AND DEDICATED STATESMAN WHO HAS BEEN, IS AND WILL
CONTINUE TO BE AN ENERGETIC, COURAGEOUS, AND FARSIGHTED
LEADER ON BEHALF OF THE ALLIANCE.

WHILE I KNOW I WILL SEE YOU IN WASHINGTON IN THE COMING MONTHS,
I DO WANT TO SAY A FEW WORDS ABOUT MY COLLEAGUES, THE PERMANENT
REPRESENTATIVES.

AS A CONGRESSMAN, I USED TO TELL STUDENT GROUPS WITH WHOM I MET
FREQUENTLY THAT OUR "CONGRESSMEN DID NOT JUST HAPPEN TO BE THERE."
RATHER, "EACH WAS THERE FOR A REASON." "FIND IT," I WOULD SAY,
"AND YOU WILL HAVE LEARNED SOMETHING VALUABLE ABOUT OUR COUNTRY
AND ITS PEOPLE."

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PAGE 04 NATO 05689 03 OF 03 152055Z

THIS IS EQUALLY TRUE OF THIS COUNCIL, FOR EACH OF YOU WAS SENT
HERE FOR A REASON. EACH OF YOU IS A TRUE REPRESENTATIVE OF YOUR
NATION AND YOUR PEOPLE. THROUGH YOU I HAVE LEARNED MUCH ABOUT
YOUR COUNTRIES AND YOUR PEOPLE.

MY THANKS TO MY FRIEND THE DEAN, ANDRE DE STAERCKE, WHOSE
COUNSEL HAS BENEFITTED ME EACH DAY -- HE HAS NO PEER -- HE'S
UNIQUE TO MY COLLEAGUES AND THEIR DELEGATIONS; THE CHAIRMAN OF
THE MILITARY COMMITTEE, WHOSE TASK IS AS DIFFICULT AS IT IS
IMPORTANT; THE MEMBERS OF THE INTERNATIONAL STAFF AND THE INTER-
NATIONAL MILITARY STAFF -- PARTICULARLY THE NEAR FLAWLESS AND
LONG-SUFFERING INTERPRETERS, WHO HAVE SERVED ME MORE THAN MOST,
GIVEN MY LINGUISTIC SHORTCOMINGS; THE NATO COMMANDERS; AND
ALL THE DEDICATED AND COMPETENT MEN AND WOMEN, CIVILIAN AND
MILITARY, WORKING TO STRENGTHEN OUR ALLIANCE.

THIS IS AN UNIQUE INSTITUTION -- THERE IS NO
OTHER LIKE IT. I VALUE HAVING BEEN A PART OF IT. IT WILL REMAIN A
PART OF ME. I THANK YOU, MR. CHAIRMAN.
END TEXTRUMSFELD

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